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Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifty-second session

Draft report

Rapporteur: Ms. Imelda **Smolcic** (Uruguay)

Addendum

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2014-2015
(Item 3 (b))

Programme 20
Human rights

1. At its 15th, 21st and 22nd meetings, on 13, 20 and 22 June 2012, the Committee considered programme 20, Human rights, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2014-2015 (A/67/6 (Prog. 20)).

2. The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights introduced the programme and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. Support was expressed for the strategic framework for programme 20, Human rights, for the period 2014-2015. Furthermore, the programme's important role in United Nations activities was emphasized. The view was expressed that the proposed strategic framework for the period 2014-2015, except for changes introduced in response to new mandates, was similar to that approved for the period 2012-2013, which was a well-balanced document. Moreover, the hope was expressed that the Committee would be able to constructively address and adopt the programme by consensus, given that it is one of the three pillars of the United Nations. Clarifications were sought with regard to challenges encountered in the implementation of the programme of work and the related lessons learned.

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4. Queries were raised on the mechanisms for the involvement of the Human Rights Council in the review of the proposed strategic framework. The view was expressed that a constructive dialogue between Member States and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on strengthening cooperation and assistance in the area of human rights should be held at the Human Rights Council. Furthermore, the view was expressed that the advice provided by the Office of Legal Affairs to the High Commissioner could not be accepted and that, in accordance with regulation 4.8 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (ST/SGB/2000/8), the strategic framework should be officially submitted to and reviewed by the Human Rights Council and the related recommendations conveyed to the Committee during its current session.

5. The view was also expressed that, according to its mandate, the Committee was not in a position to request from the relevant sectoral, functional and regional intergovernmental bodies the results of their review of the respective strategic frameworks of the programmes. Views were expressed that the review conducted by the Committee in 2010 concerning the 2012-2013 strategic framework for this programme remained similar to the present review and that the conditions had not changed. The observation was made that the terms of reference of the Committee should be revised to include the consideration of all results of the reviews of strategic frameworks conducted by the respective intergovernmental bodies. Clarification was sought from the Secretariat with regard to the respective mandates and normative and information documents governing the provision to the Committee of the results of the review by relevant intergovernmental bodies of strategic frameworks, in particular that for the human rights programme.

6. The view was expressed that the absence of the results of the review of programme 20 by the Human Rights Council could hamper or even prevent the effective consideration of that programme by the Committee. It was observed that the Committee should consider programme 20 in the course of its normal working process, which might not be linked to or made conditional on the results of the review of the programme by the Human Rights Council. The view was expressed that the consideration of programme 20 could be postponed pending the results of the review of the programme by the Human Rights Council at its regular session (18 June to 6 July 2012).

7. The view was expressed that the programme of work should be implemented in strict compliance with the existing mandates and in accordance with the principles of transparency, independence, impartiality, indivisibility and non-selectivity. The view was also expressed that human rights mechanisms should be applied equally to all countries and that any assistance, cooperation and services in the area of human rights should be provided only at their request.

8. With regard to component B, Right to development, under subprogramme 1, Human rights mainstreaming, right to development, and research and analysis, concern was expressed that the component did not properly reflect the operational aspects of the right to development.

9. Regarding component C, Research and analysis, under subprogramme 1, the view was expressed that more emphasis should be placed on the implementation of the Durban Declaration adopted by the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, as well as on the functionality

of the human rights mechanisms. Concern was also expressed with regard to the presence of more quantitative than qualitative indicators of achievement under that component. The view was expressed that accepted terminology should be used in the formulation of the strategy, especially with regard to new forms of discrimination under paragraph 20.11 (a).

10. With regard to subprogramme 2, Supporting human rights treaty bodies, the view was expressed that it was premature to reflect in the proposed strategic framework the expected accomplishment and the related indicator of achievement on more streamlined and harmonized reporting procedures for human rights treaty bodies, as the issue was still under consideration by the General Assembly.

11. Regarding subprogramme 3, Advisory services, technical cooperation and field activities, the view was expressed that efforts should be directed more at strengthening national capacity in the area of human rights rather than at providing support to peacekeeping operations, commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions.

12. With regard to subprogramme 4, Supporting the Human Rights Council, its subsidiary bodies and mechanisms, the view was expressed that support to the universal periodic review process should be emphasized more in comparison with support to special procedures and complaints mechanisms.

13. Regarding legislative mandates, the view was expressed that not all of the recently adopted mandates in the area of human rights were reflected in the strategic framework for the period 2014-2015.

Conclusions and recommendations

14. The Committee recommended that, owing to a shortage of time, the Chair of the fifty-second session of the Committee for Programme and Coordination transmit the conclusions on and proposed amendments to programme 20, Human rights, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2014-2015 to the Chair of the Third Committee at the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

15. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly allocate programme 20, Human rights, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2014-2015 to the Third Committee for its review and action, under the agenda item entitled "Programme planning".